

TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

New York State Agricultural Society,

WITH AN

ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES.

VOLUME XXIII.—1863.

ALBANY :
COMSTOCK & CASSIDY, PRINTERS.
1864.

HISTORY OF THE AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS OF NEW YORK FROM 1791 TO 1862.

BY WILLIAM BACON.

The State of New York lies between forty degrees thirty minutes and forty-five degrees north latitude, and between five degrees five minutes east, and two degrees fifty-five minutes west longitude from Washington. Its length from east to west, including Long Island, is four hundred and eight miles; exclusive of that island, it is three hundred and forty miles. From north to south its greatest length is three hundred and ten miles.

Its northern boundary is through Lake Ontario, the River St. Lawrence and Canada line; on the east it has Vermont, Massachusetts and Connecticut; south the Atlantic ocean, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and west Lake Erie and Niagara river. It contains 45,658 square miles, exclusive of lakes, with which it is pleasantly interspersed. Its elevation of surface embraces every altitude from the low water-mark of the ocean to the frowning head of Mount Marcy, nearly five and a half thousand feet above tide-water; with these variations of surface and soil, it necessarily possesses rare facilities for agricultural purposes.

On the first discovery of this State it was covered with a heavy growth of timber, which indicated the depth and fertility of its soil; in common with the early settlers of the other eastern States of America, it appears that great dependence was placed on the capacity of the soil to sustain itself, even under the influence of severe and incessant cropping. No particular value was placed on manure in many districts, while in some portions, in early days, it was considered a nuisance. We have heard it from the elderly men of a generation now passed away, that in their day they had known manure from adjacent farmers' yards drawn and deposited on the ice of the Hudson, that it might be borne away on the opening of the river in the spring. We cannot, however, believe that this was a very common practice or one of long continuance, and if such a state of wastefulness did exist in the earlier days of our country, the farmers of the State of New York were not the only ones guilty of the practice of throwing away the strength and wealth of the lands; it extended into other states.

More than a century and a half from the commencement of the settlement of the State had passed, before much attention appears to have been given to the improvement of its agriculture.

The earliest account of united effort leading to this improvement, we find in the following proceedings, dating in 1791:

"At a meeting of a respectable number of citizens at the Senate chamber, in the city of New York, for the purpose of instituting a society for

the promotion of agriculture and manufactures, the Hon. Ezra L'Hommedieu, Esq., in the chair,

"Resolved, That Mr. Chancellor Livingston, Mr. Simeon De Witt and Mr. Samuel L. Mitchell, be a committee to prepare and report rules and regulations for the government of the Society.

"At a meeting of the Society, in Senate chamber, on Saturday, the 26th day of February, 1791, the Hon. John Sloss Hobart, Esq., in the chair, the rules and regulations reported by the committee, having been read and considered by paragraphs, were amended and agreed to, and were in words following, viz:

"Rules and regulations of the society for the advancement of agriculture, manufactures and the arts."

These rules were, in substance, as follows: The officers of the society should consist of a president, vice-president, two secretaries and treasurer; that the society shall meet annually at the place where the Legislature meets, on the Tuesday next after the convening of both houses, and continue, by adjournment, during the session of the Legislature. That the officers should be elected on the first day of each annual meeting of the Society. Candidates for membership must be nominated seven days previous to their admission, and must be elected by a majority of members convened. Each member was to pay two dollars on admission, and one dollar each successive year while he remained a member; that the subjects for investigation of the Society shall be *Agriculture, Manufactures and Arts*, with subjects connected with them. The Society should parcel the State into districts, and at the annual election of officers elect a secretary for each district, to reside in the same, whose business was to convene the members of his district, inquire into the state of agriculture and manufactures in the same, to receive communications relative to the objects of the institution, collect, arrange and transmit them to the president for the action of the Society. Honorary members were admitted in the manner prescribed for the election of ordinary members, from among persons residing in the State, whose talents and character might add to the respectability of the Society. No member could be entitled to the privileges of the Society until he had paid all dues to the Society.

At this meeting the following were elected officers: Hon. Robert R. Livingston, President; John Sloss Hobart, Vice-President; Alexander McComb, Esq., Treasurer; Jno. McKesson, Esq., Secretary.

On the 12th of March, 1793, an act was passed in the Legislature of the State of New York, incorporating Robert R. Livingston and seventy-two others named in the act of incorporation, with such others as might from time to time join themselves into a body politic and corporate, in deed, fact and name, under the name of the Society for the promotion of Agriculture, Arts and Manufactures, which act was to continue in force until 1804, the society to hold all the rights and privileges usually granted to corporate bodies.

In the intervening time from the organization of the society, it appears from the published transactions that the machinery performing its labors had been kept in so good running order, that some excellent results had followed. The farmers through the State had been requested, through the

circulars, to send in the results of their experience on the following subjects, to wit:

Manures, marl, plaster, lime, leached ashes; making and collecting manures in the farmers' barn-yard.

Soils, the nature and character of those on which experiments are tried.

Tillage.—Depth of *plowing*; should the sub-soil be stirred; destruction of weeds and grasses in fallows; is land best made mellow for the reception of seed?

Stock.—Is keeping many horses profitable—are not oxen preferable—comparative expense between keeping horses and oxen and mules—do horses draw best by harness or collars—will oxen perform most labor to draw by the horns or withers—how are sheep best managed, &c., &c?

Grains.—The best varieties, and soil best adapted to different varieties.

Grasses.—The best for pastures, for meadows; best pasturage for sheep, neat cattle, horses, swine.

Fruit.—The best apples for cider—grafting, inoculating and planting orchards—to what extent ought pear trees to be cultivated for fruit and liquor obtained from them—the best method of cultivating other fruits.

Forest Trees.—The locust, white mulberry; raising forest trees in nursery; transplanting forest trees; hedges.

Insects.—Their habits; the best method of preventing their depredations, &c.

Bees, silkworm, their habits and culture; manufactures.

The series of essays called in by these interrogations, as published in the society's transactions, constitute a valuable collection, and show much close and reliable observation on the part of the contributors, residing in different parts of the State.

In one of these essays Chancellor Livingston gives the result of various experiments with plaster, which then (in 1792,) he had used more or less for three years. In one made in 1789, he says, after my buckwheat came up, I dressed one-fourth of an acre with a bushel and a half of plaster, sowing three pounds of clover seed. It appeared to me the buckwheat was somewhat better for it, but a very heavy rain lodged it when in full blossom. I could make no accurate experiment. Soil a poor worn out sand.

The farmer of the present day would think it no marvel if his buckwheat fell down even without rain, if he applied a like quantity of plaster. This seemed to have been about the average quantity applied to an acre in those days.

In 1793-4, a correspondence took place between Robert R. Livingston and the President of the Chamber of Commerce in New York, on the subject of introducing plants and animals from foreign places, which resulted in instructions to the captains of vessels visiting foreign lands, to procure in such countries small quantities of seeds of such plants as promised to be useful here; to remark the difference that may distinguish cattle, either used for food or for the draught, and report difference to the President and Secretary of the Agricultural Society.

"To be particularly attentive to the breeds of sheep, and whenever they shall appear superior to those of this State, either in size or fineness of

fleece, or quantity of wool, to import if possible a pair of them, a ram at least.

"If any land or water fowl, not known in this country, should be domesticated in the country you visit, you will procure a few of them, amongst which may be remembered the Hoco of the Brazils and Cayenne. It is nearly of the size of a turkey, and black."

From 1794 to 1808, the operations of the Society appear to have been limited to the annual meeting in February, and the collection of essays on various subjects, giving the results of experiments, or the observations of the essayists. Their published transactions are so limited that they leave us ignorant of the names of those who held the offices of trust during this period.

In 1808, we find the association acting under the name of the society for the promotion of useful arts. The board of officers then consisted of a president, two vice-presidents, three secretaries, a treasurer, and a board of nine counsellors. Robert R. Livingston was elected president that year, and held the office under successive appointments until the time of his death in 1813, and was succeeded in 1814 by Simeon De Witt, who for the six years previous had held the office of vice-president of the society.

Agriculture now held but a minor place in the proceedings of the society, which was intently bent on investigating the arts.

In 1808, the Legislature passed an act giving bounties or premiums on the manufacture of woolen cloths. The premiums were of liberal amount. They were awarded by the judges of the several county courts, and appear to have awakened competition in all parts of the State. The first awards were to individuals in twenty-five counties; the amount paid out was \$2,000 in premiums of \$80 each. In 1810 competitors appeared in thirty-two counties, and the amount paid was \$2,560.

In the Legislature of 1810, a law establishing a new scale of premiums was passed, making the largest \$40, the second \$35, and a third premium of \$30. That year competition arose in thirty-nine counties, and the premiums were divided between 109 competitors, no person receiving more than one premium.

In June, 1812, in view of the success which had attended the liberality of the State in bestowing those bounties on domestic cloth, a new law was passed extending the bounty to manufacturers of broadcloth, the cloth to be manufactured in the State, from wool raised in the State.

The other conditions were, that the quantity must be one hundred yards of cloth, six quarters wide. The merits of the cloth were to be decided at meetings of the Society in Albany, on or before the third Wednesday in February in each year. The premiums on household manufacture were continued as before. This and the following year mark a falling off of competition.

The number of yards of woolen cloth entered for premium in ten counties in January, 1814, was 1,877½. Of this, the largest quantity, ten specimens of 273¼ yards, was from Rensselaer county; the smallest was one from Oneida of 36 yards. The amount given by the State and the Society for these premiums in five years was \$15,210. In 1814, the Society passed laws defining the objects of the Society as follows:

Agriculture, including domestic economy, husbandry in general, horticulture and botany, chemistry, mechanic arts and the fine arts. Committees were appointed on these several subjects, and the committee on fine arts was directed to procure a copy of the best and most correct portrait of the late President of the Society, Robert R. Livingston, for the use of the Society. At this time the Society numbered 167 members.

Simeon De Witt presided over the Society in 1815 and in 1816, and under the auspices of the committee we see the labors of the Society in a greater measure directed to agriculture. The number of competitors in domestic manufactures was increased, and the names of members numbered 210.

As a memorial of those days of family industry and thrift, we here subjoin some statistics of the quality and value of cloths manufactured in families and otherwise, according to the census returns of 1810:

The amount of cotton goods manufactured in the State was 216,013 yards, which being then valued at thirty-two cents a yard, was worth \$69,124.16. There were in the State twenty-six cotton manufactories, five of which were in Dutchess, and five in Oneida counties. The quantity of flaxen goods manufactured in families and otherwise, was 3,372,645 yards. The value at 37½ cents a yard, amounted to \$2,014,741.87. Blended and unnamed stuffs (cloth), 180,659 yards, worth 35 cents a yard, making a value of \$63,230.65. The quantity of tow cloth was 21,721 yards, worth at 30 cents a yard, \$6,516.30. Woolen goods manufactured mainly in families, 5,257,812 yards, then being valued at 87½ cents a yard, gave a total value of \$2,850,585.50. Thread manufactured, 43,680 runs, valued at \$7,644. There were in the State 33,068 looms, of which New York county had only 3, Washington county 2,200, the largest number of any one county.

Here we lose sight of the Society for the Promotion of the Useful Arts, and are next introduced to the State Board, authorized by "An act to improve the Agriculture of this State," passed April 9, 1819.

By this act the sum of \$10,000 a year, for two years, was appropriated for the promotion of agriculture and family domestic manufactures in this State, the sum to be distributed among the several counties in this State. Of this sum, the greatest amount, \$650, was given to the county of New York, and the smallest sum, \$50, to the county of Chautauqua.

The same act authorized the formation of agricultural societies in any county or parts of two counties where the people were disposed to unite, the members of which had power to raise money for the purposes of the society, and on making a certificate of the amount raised by the society, and lodging said certificate with the Comptroller, he was authorized to give an order on the State Treasurer equal in amount to that raised by contribution of the society.

Another condition of the act was, that each of the agricultural societies so formed, should elect such and so many officers as they thought proper, "all of whom should be practical farmers," whose duty it was to regulate and award such premiums as they thought most conducive to agricultural progress, each competitor being required to give a description of the animal offered; or, if a crop, the nature of the soil, method of cultivation, &c.

By section six of this act, the presidents of these several agricultural

societies, or a delegate chosen from each of the societies, were to constitute and form a *Board of Agriculture*, which was to meet at the Capitol in Albany, on the first Monday after a meeting of the Legislature of each year; that they elect a President and Secretary and such other officers as they think proper, to receive and examine all reports and returns, and select for publication such of these and such essays as they think proper, and to publish a volume annually, at the expense of the State, for distribution through the societies to the good people of the State, not to exceed 1500 copies of said volume.

The Treasurer of the State was annually to pay to the Board of Agriculture, on warrant of the Comptroller, the sum of \$1,000, to enable said Board to purchase and distribute among the several agricultural societies such useful seeds as they might think proper, and to defray such other expenses of the Board as are not otherwise provided for.

Agreeable to the provisions of this act, the President and delegates of agricultural societies in twenty-six counties assembled at the Capitol in Albany, on Monday, the 10th day of January, 1820, when the meeting was organized by the appointment of Hon. Stephen Van Rensselaer, of Albany, as Chairman, and Charles H. Havens, Esq., of Suffolk county, as Secretary.

At this meeting the Board was further organized by the appointment of Hon. Stephen Van Rensselaer as President, and Solomon Southwick, Esq., of Albany, as Secretary. A committee, of whom G. W. Featherstonhaugh was Chairman, was appointed to report a plan of operation of the Board, which report was submitted to the Board on Thursday, January 10th, recommending the appointment of a Vice-President, a Corresponding Secretary, to establish a correspondence with similar associations and individuals in the Old World as well as at home, and that the indispensable expenses of stationery and postage be allowed said Secretary. The report also recommended the appointment of a general committee to consist of President, Vice-President, Corresponding Secretary, and four members of the Board, to be selected from the four Senatorial Districts of the State, the said committee to convene at Albany on convenient notice of the President and Secretary.

It appears to have been the duty of this committee to prepare for publication such matter collected by the society as they saw fit, and to prepare a report of the progress of the board, to be presented at its annual meeting.

In accordance with these resolutions, James Le Ray De Chaumont, of Jefferson county, was chosen Vice President, and George W. Featherstonhaugh, of Schenectady, Cor. Secretary. The members of the committee from each Senatorial District were George Huntington, of Oneida, for the western; Uri Tracy, of Chenango, for the middle; Zebulon R. Shepherd, of Washington Co., for the eastern, and Abijah Hammond, of Westchester Co., for the southern district.

This committee issued an address to the several agricultural societies inviting their co-operation, and issued schedules, with interrogatories annexed, to be distributed among the members of the societies for them to fill and return on the following subjects: First, with regard to grain crops; second, neat cattle and stock in general; third, with regard to items that

had received premiums; fourth, to comprehend the principal features of agriculture and the intrinsic resources of the county.

On the 24th of March, 1820, an additional act was passed by the Legislature in favor of the board, giving them out of the balance of unappropriated money, previously granted for agricultural purposes, the sum of \$500 to enable it to purchase books for the benefit of its object.

The first volume published by the board is principally made up of valuable essays on agricultural subjects. Among its appreciable contents is a geological survey of Albany county, taken under the directions of the agricultural society of the county, by Amos Eaton and T. Romeyn Beck. If such surveys could become more common now a days, they would introduce a new and valuable era in our educational and agricultural interest.

On the 16th day of April, 1822, the Legislature passed what claims to be an act to amend an act entitled an act to improve the agriculture of the State, passed April 7, 1819. The most surprising feature of this amending act comes under the 5th section, which says, "it shall be lawful for the board of agriculture to omit publishing the annual volume required by said act when they shall deem it expedient, nor shall it be lawful for said board to expend on or for said volume more than one thousand dollars."

In 1820 a geological and agricultural survey of Albany county was made by Doctor T. Romeyn Beck. In 1821 a similar survey was made of Rensselaer county, by Prof. Amos Eaton, the latter, perhaps both under the direction of Hon. Stephen Van Rensselaer, whose long and useful life devoted to the advancement of rural arts; and about the same time a similar survey was made of Saratoga county by Dr. John H. Steel, of Ballston. Each of these surveys contain much matter of sterling practical importance, not only to the farmers of the several counties, but to the agricultural body politic through the country.

In 1802 Merino sheep were introduced into this country by Chancellor Livingston, of Clermont, Columbia county. The success which attended this introduction induced other enterprising men in this and other States to engage in their importation, so that of those brought from other lands, with their increase, wool-growing had become a prominent part of domestic industry in 1821. A difficulty was found in attaining the greatest success in this business, in the long winters of the north, during which the sheep must, from necessity, be confined to close quarters and dry food. In a measure to counteract these difficulties, the cultivation of root crops, to form a portion of their winter feed was recommended. Hence we find in 1823 the results of many experiments in the cultivation and feeding of the turnip family and carrots, while each of these appears from the results to have been well worthy of the attention of the farmer, they do not seem to have received very general attention.

At this point in the proceedings of the board of agriculture, the attention of individuals in different parts of the State appear to have been attracted by the importance of its labor, and so that the inquiries proposed in their circulars met with a ready and flattering response, and a new spirit of inquiry and investigation was created, which led to beneficial results; and these results, in the form of essays, were communicated to the board, thus

furnishing a pleasant amount of matter to fill the pages of their Transactions.

During the decade ending 1830, enterprising individuals had introduced from Europe choice specimens from some of the best herds in the east, and through their board their respective merits became known to the mass of farmers, many of whom availed themselves of the advantages they offered, by introducing them upon their farms.

A member of the board of agriculture writing in 1826 says: "The labors of the board of agriculture became extinct in April last by the expiration of the law under which it was organized." Among the important improvements which had taken place in agricultural items during its existence, he alludes particularly to those in agricultural tools, the saving of animal strength in plowing, the plow having been very materially improved. It cannot be otherwise than that the labors of the plowman were also materially diminished by these improvements, for reason teaches that the more perfect the implement the less labor required to manage it. Harrows were also much improved. Rollers, cultivators, drill barrows, straw cutters, flax dressers, and many other descriptions of machinery, were invented or introduced from abroad. In the improvement of live stock the success appears to have been equally gratifying. It was claimed that there were, at that day, in the State of New York as fine neat stock, horses, sheep and swine as are to be found anywhere. In some counties it was assumed that the aggregate of agricultural labor had increased the productive resources of agriculture from 15 to 25 per cent. in the last ten years.

From 1826 to 1832 there does not appear to have been any State organization in behalf of agricultural improvement. Agricultural societies were, however, in active operation in many counties in the State, and in their efforts met with encouraging success. In aid of these, and perhaps in a measure beyond their influence, individual enterprise was laboring with mighty power to advance the interest of the cause. In 1832 these individual labors sought a concentration, and a convention of delegates and other citizens from different counties of the State of New York was invited to meet in the Assembly Chamber in Albany on the 14th day of February in that year. At that meeting 31 counties were represented by 187 delegates and others interested, and the meeting was organized by electing Le Ray De Chaumont, of Jefferson county, as President; Ambrose Spencer, of Albany, Henry W. Delavan, of Saratoga, Vice Presidents; Jesse Buel, of Albany, Amos Briggs, of Rensselaer, Secretaries.

An able address was given by the President of the meeting, Mr. Chaumont, in which he showed the objects and advantages of a State association. After the delivery of the address, it was resolved that a committee of publication be appointed, and that they be directed to have 500 copies of the address of the Hon. President published for the benefit of the members of the convention.

A committee of fifteen was then appointed to draft and report to the convention a constitution for a State Agricultural Society, and the convention adjourned to the following Wednesday, February 15, 4 P. M. The convention met pursuant to adjournment, and Hon. E. P. Livingston, chair-

man of the committee, presented the draft of a constitution, which was read by sections and adopted.

By this constitution, the board of officers were to consist of a President, four Vice-Presidents, a Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, an Executive Committee—to consist of the before named officers and three other members of the Society, three of whom should form a quorum—and a general committee, the members of which should be located in the several counties and be equal in number to the number of representatives to which each county was entitled. The payment of fifty dollars or more entitled the contributor to life-membership.

The constitution provided that an annual meeting of the Society should be held on the Thursday following the second Tuesday of February, at the Capitol in Albany, for the election of officers, and that extra meetings be called by the Executive Committee.

A committee of one from each Senatorial district was then appointed to nominate suitable persons for officers of the Society for the ensuing year. Of this committee, James B. Murray, of the first district, was chairman.

On the 16th day of February, 1832, the Society again met, and on the recommendation of the foregoing committee, the following persons were elected the first board of officers of the "NEW YORK STATE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY:" President, LeRay De Chaumont, of Jefferson county. Vice-Presidents, Ambrose Spencer, of Albany county; Jacob Morris, of Otsego county; Robert S. Rose, of Seneca county. Recording Secretary, Philip S. Van Rensselaer, of Albany county. Corresponding Secretary, Jesse Buel, of Albany county. Treasurer, Charles R. Webster, of Albany county. Executive Committee, Henry W. Delavan, of Saratoga county; Horatio Hickok, of Rensselaer county; Jno. Townsend, of Albany county.

A series of resolutions here followed, whose object it was to present the objects of the Society to the farmers of the State, and devise plans for its future action. Among other subjects, we find one resolve appointing a committee to draw up a plan for an agricultural school or schools, to embrace experimental and practical farming; and also, "that the Executive Committee take into consideration the expediency of establishing a weekly paper—to be published under the direction and patronage of the Society—to be published at an expense of not exceeding one dollar a-year, to be circulated among the farmers throughout the State." This paper was started in 1834, and found a wide circulation, and was known as *The Cultivator*. This meeting closed with an address from Hon. A. Spencer.

Judge Buel, soon after entering upon his duties as Corresponding Secretary of the Society, issued a circular to the farmers of the State, inviting their co-operation in carrying out the objects of the Society, and inviting their correspondence on stock husbandry, tillage husbandry, horticulture and the household arts.

On the 14th day of February, 1833, the Society, agreeable to the provision of the constitution, again assembled at the Capitol in Albany, and the President, Mr. Chaumont, being absent on a tour in France, Ambrose Spencer, Vice-President, took the chair.

A report on the plan for an agricultural school was presented by Judge Buel. This report proposed a farm of sufficient dimensions, experiments

with crops of the farm and the garden, and of rearing animals; of farm buildings sufficient to enable them to carry out the objects of the school; a library, with philosophical apparatus and the necessary corps of teachers.

The Treasurer's report showed the income and expenditures of the Society, in 1832, to be as follows.

Received from three life-members, \$50 each.....	\$150
Received from three members, \$5 each.....	15
Received from two members, \$3 each.....	6
Received from 102 members, \$1 each.....	102
	<hr/>
	\$273

The disbursements were	
For 12 bs. white mulberry seed.....	\$26
For printing 300 circular letters, 250 directions for planting mulberry seeds, and 1000 copies of Transactions of the Society.....	113
	<hr/>
	139

Leaving in the hands of the Treasurer.....	<hr/>
	\$134

At this meeting, a committee reported in favor of introducing cattle-shows and fairs, under the superintendence of the Society; and that one be held in Albany on the second Thursday of October, and one in the city of New York on the fourth Thursday of the same month.

It was voted that 500 copies of the proceedings of the meeting, with such other papers as the Corresponding Secretary saw fit to embody with them, be published in pamphlet form.

Le Ray De Chaumont, being absent from the country declined a re-election as president of the Society, and as a token of respect for his past services the Society elected him honorary member.

The Hon. Jesse Buel, of Albany, was elected President.

Dr. John P. Beekman, of Columbia county, Corresponding Secretary.

It appears that the committee having the matter in hand so far altered the arrangement as to announce a cattle fair to be held in Albany on the last Thursday of October. At this fair it does not appear that animals were exhibited from more than five counties, while the show of other articles however flattering it might have been in that day was meagre indeed compared with that, even of county fairs at the present time.

Several sales are reported to have taken place at the fair at prices as follows: Cows sold at from \$30 to \$40 each, a lot of short horned two year old and yearling heifers \$80 and \$100 each, oxen from \$110 to \$120 a pair, bucks from \$30 to \$40, ewes from \$7 to \$15, a lot of wethers \$13 each.

In closing our notes of the progress of the year it may be proper to remark that it was announced at the annual meeting, that it was understood that agricultural societies had been formed in the counties of Jefferson, Oswego, Monroe, Onondaga, Saratoga, Essex and Clinton, although no reports were received from any except Jefferson during the year. Similar societies were formed in Albany, Columbia, and New York counties.

At the annual meeting of the Society, in February 1834, the Treasurer reported that he had received from the several member of the society, the sum of \$298 00 of which \$150 was for life membership.

The disbursements had been	241 00
	<hr/>
Balance	\$57 00

At this meeting, the first, a specimen number of the Cultivator, an agri-

cultural paper, the publication of which it was proposed to continue at Albany, was presented for the approval of the society, by the members of which it was resolved that they would aid in its circulation. A resolution was also passed authorizing or recommending that a petition be presented to the Legislature renewing the request for an appropriation for an agricultural school; also asking for funds to distribute among county agricultural societies to enable them to offer premiums. It was also recommended that the society for the sale of stock and other products of husbandry and of household labor, meet at Albany the first Wednesday and Thursday of October, and in the city of New York on the fourth Wednesday and Thursday of the same month. Judge Buel was again elected President, and J. P. Beekman, Corresponding Secretary.

Although many of the most influential citizens of different and mostly all parts of the State were devotedly engaged in behalf of the society, it does not appear to have been making much progress. Ignorance of its importance and the general apathy which most farmers showed to improvements of the kind were obstacles that were common in the way of its success; nor did the Legislature, to whom its advantages were often shown, by petitions sent in, in its behalf, express much more interest in the subject than though no such society existed. But the destiny of the society was in the hands of intelligent men, those who fully understood the importance of the object in view, and they saw too, that perseverance would ultimately insure success.

As a new effort to secure this success, a call was made for an agricultural convention, to be held at Albany, on the second Monday of February, 1836. This call was signed by sixty-four gentlemen of nine different counties, and was addressed to the people in each town in the State, inviting delegates therefrom.

This Convention it appears met at the time appointed, and although the people were not fully represented, a very flattering number of delegates from different sections were in attendance. This convention was organized by electing Jesse Buel as President, and Daniel S. Dickinson of Broome county, and J. J. Viele of Rensselaer county, as Secretaries. A series of resolutions were adopted, a central committee of correspondence, and an auxiliary committee of one in each county was appointed, and a memorial to the Legislature invoking their aid in behalf of agriculture was drawn up and the meeting adjourned *sine die*.

On the eleventh of February, of the same year, the State Society held their annual meeting, at which Archibald McIntyre was chosen President, and Jesse Buel, Corresponding Secretary.

On the sixth of May following, a legislative act was passed incorporating William L. Marcy and thirty-one others named in the act with all who should unite with them, as a body corporate to be known as the New York State Agricultural Society, giving them the usual powers and privileges of bodies corporate.

It appears that the State Agricultural Convention, and State Agricultural Society, though different organizations to promote the same object and to a great extent composed of the same individuals, both held their meetings on the same day and at the same place in 1837. In the proceed-

ings of the former, we find decided effort to secure and advance the prosperity of the latter, which still presses slowly on through difficulties and discouragements towards the attainment of its object. At the annual meeting of the State Society, John P. Beekman, of Columbia county, was chosen President, and Jesse Buel re-elected Corresponding Secretary.

A committee of three was appointed to test, determine and certify the merits of new farm implements and machinery that might be presented for examination, and this committee were to meet semi-annually for this purpose. A committee was also appointed to enquire into the necessity and importance of increased attention to Horticulture, and the household arts, as connected with improvements in Agriculture: that committees be appointed whose business it should be to report at the next annual meeting the progress of improvement in neat cattle, horses, sheep and swine. Four committees of three members each, were appointed for this purpose; another committee was appointed to report the condition of the several county agricultural societies to the Secretary as soon as could be ascertained.

In the year 1838, the State Agricultural Convention, which appeared then to be working into the former track of the State Agricultural Society, met at Albany, February 1, and the State Agricultural Society met on the second day, when the President and Secretary of the previous year were re-elected.

The business of the Society, appears to have been, to choose a committee to confer with the agricultural committee of the Assembly on the expediency of making an appropriation of public moneys in aid of the improvement in husbandry to hear the reports of the several committees appointed at the last annual meeting, which reports were read and accepted, and the committees were directed to furnish copies of them for publication in the *Genesee Farmer, and Cultivator*.

Committees of two each were appointed to report at the next annual meeting on the following subjects: 1. Farm yard management. 2. The feeding of sheep in winter. 3. Best method of stall-feeding cattle. 4. Best vegetable or root crops for feeding stock. 5. The most profitable mode of fattening hogs and feeding swine. 6. On converting weeds and green crops into manure; making composts. 7. Effects of lime on soils. 8. Management of meadow and pasture lands. 9. The proper time to cut timothy and clover, and best method of curing them. 10. To digest a plan for improving highways.

The meeting adjourned to February 1839, at which time the Treasurer made his annual report, showing a surplus of \$104. The subjects chosen, on which reports were to be made the following year, were so nearly connected with those selected to be reported on at this meeting, that it is unnecessary to repeat them here. The annual address was given by Hon. J. J. Vicle of Rensselaer, in which he urged the importance of agricultural education and the introduction of branches connected with agriculture into the schools.

Anthony Van Bergen, of Greene county, was elected President, and Jesse Buel, of Albany, Corresponding Secretary, and the meeting adjourned.

We now pass to 1841, which marks a period of half a century, since the

inauguration of the Society for the promotion of Agriculture, &c., and in reviewing the progress of these years, we find many flattering omens of future success, with many discouragements attending the labors of the worthy men who were engaged in bringing about improvements in the art of cultivation.

It sometimes happens with the farmer, that after his ground is prepared for a crop, and the seed is carefully committed to the bosom of the earth, that a drought follows, and the seed long remains buried in the soil, or rude and cold winds may pass over, and check the progress of vegetation until the hopes of harvest become as barren as the soil appeared to be, on whose fertility those hopes had anchored. But in time the genial showers fall upon the barren, uninviting field, and the warm sun lends his beams to invigorate, the dormant seed expands and bursts into life, and a bounteous harvest follows. So Livingston, Van Rensselaer, Buel, and a host of others, had in their day been casting abroad the seeds of improvement in the arts that clothe and feed the nation, under discouragements almost as fatal as the feverish drought, or the blighting influences of the blasting wind, yet this was not altogether a labor on barren soil, each in his day saw new fruits of progress of the result of his labors, and although those fruits were not as abundant as was desirable, new germs were continually developing themselves, teaching them to labor on and faint not, to be patient and wait the result.

The year 1841 brought new and very cheering prospects to the State in behalf of agricultural and horticultural improvement. On the fifth day of May of that year, an act was passed in the Assembly, appropriating the sum of eight thousand dollars a year for five years, of which the State Society was to receive \$700, the remaining \$7,300 to be apportioned among the several counties of the State in which agricultural societies were formed, and conformed to the conditions of the law.

Probably in anticipation of this act, the State Society had reorganized in the February preceding, and elected Joel B. Nott, of Albany, President, eight Vice Presidents, being one from each Senatorial district. Henry S. Randall, of Cortland county, Corresponding Secretary. Ezra P. Prentice, of Albany, Treasurer. Luther Tucker, of Albany, Recording Secretary, who with five others, constituted an Executive Committee.

By the constitution of this Society, the Executive Committee, were required to meet once a month to look after the interests of the Society.

At the meeting of the Executive Committee in April, 1841, it was resolved that the New York State Agricultural Society will hold its annual fair at Syracuse, on Wednesday and Thursday, the 29th and 30th days of September next, and Messrs. Randall, of Cortland, and Bement and Tucker of Albany, were appointed to prepare a list of premiums to be awarded at this exhibition. This list, when accepted, offered \$248 in premiums on neat stock, \$80 on horses, \$46 on swine, \$90 on sheep, \$108 on farm implements, besides opening a wide field for discretionary premiums on articles of domestic manufacture, specimens of grain, flowers and fruits. The citizens of the State were invited to compete on stock, &c., and patentees and manufacturers through the United States, on agricultural machinery. An additional list of premiums on butter and cheese and field crops was presented,

the awards of which were to be given at the annual meeting in January, 1842; the articles offered to be deposited at a suitable place in the city of Albany, on or before the 18th day of January. At this meeting, Miss Margaretta Morris, of Germantown, Pa., John Hannon, of Yorkshire, England, and Elias Phinney, of Mass., were elected honorary members.

It has been remarked of this fair, which may be called the first successful one of the "New York State Agricultural Society," that the spectators, variously estimated from ten to fifteen thousand in number, called from all parts of the State, and from a large number of the States of the Union, manifested a most satisfactory interest in all the performances. The pens for the reception of animals were in a grove, near the Court House. The Court House was thrown open for the reception and exhibition of domestic manufactures and works of art, the recommendations to receive these articles were found too small for the demand, so much more interest was taken in the matter than was anticipated by the committee.

On the morning of the 28th, twenty-five car loads of the choice animals from the vicinity of Albany and the river counties, left that city for the exhibition, and to be brought into competition with other animals from different sections of the State.

At two o'clock on the second day, the large depot was filled to its uttermost capacity by an anxious crowd, to listen to the reports of committees of awards, and the closing address. The amount awarded in premiums of plate or coin \$889, besides diplomas, honorable mentions, &c. At the winter meeting in Albany additional awards were made to the amount of \$201.

The amount received by the treasurer in 1841, including \$46 in the hands of the former Treasurer, was \$2056.87. The amount paid out by him to the order of the Society was \$1087.37 leaving a balance in his hands of \$969.36. Fair receipts \$349.

The number of life members, through the payment of \$50 each, was at this time ten. The number of subscribing members had arisen to four hundred and fifty. Of this number, there are many, after a lapse of nearly a quarter of a century, whose names still remain as the firm and tried friends and working members of the Society.

The attendance on the winter meeting of the society showed that the zeal that called out the many at the State Fair was not an ephemeral concern; a large number of devoted members was present, and the exhibition of butter, cheese, with the other articles, was all that in the then present state of progress could be anticipated.

At this meeting, as a new incitement to the more general diffusion of knowledge, the executive committee were instructed to offer gold medals, or silver plate, or their equivalent in money, to the authors of the best essays on such subjects as the committee should consider best calculated to promote the interest of agriculture. James S. Wadsworth, of Livingston county, was chosen President of the society, and H. S. Randall, Corresponding Secretary. A resolution was passed, recommending that the fair of 1842 be held at the city of Albany, and that of 1843 at Rochester.

As the result of the triumph of the society in 1841, a volume of transactions was published, in which are recorded not only its own doings, but reports from thirty-two county associations, all formed or reorganized that

year. A report on the agriculture of South Carolina, by J. R. Poinsett, one on the agriculture of Pennsylvania, by William Penn Kinzie, on the agriculture of Virginia, by James M. Garnett, on English agriculture, by John Hannon, all prepared in answer to circulars from the society, besides a goodly list of essays from observing farmers in the State.

The second annual exhibition and fair was held at Albany on 27th, 28th and 29th days of September, 1842. Premiums of the value of nearly \$2000 were offered, and competition ran decidedly high; about six hundred animals were entered for premiums, the quantities of domestic manufactures and farm implements were of a very satisfactory amount, (this year the society offered a liberal premium for animals from other States.) The amount of funds in the hands of the treasurer was \$3,319.38. Disbursements \$1475.36. Balance on hand \$1843.92. Fair receipts \$876.70.

At the annual meeting of the society in January, 1843, the officers of 1842 were re-elected, and Rochester designated as the place of holding the fair for that year, an enlarged premium list was published, and ample inducements offered to call the farmers of the State and its vicinity to the exhibition.

The fair was held at Rochester on the 19th, 20th and 21st days of September. The executive committee, with the aid of enterprising citizens of that place, had selected beautiful grounds for the exhibition, and made every provision for the display of the various articles to be exhibited, and the comfort of those who might honor the occasion by their presence. When the time for holding the fair arrived, the rush for the grounds was immense. Canal boats and cars poured in their thousands, while the streets of Rochester were blockaded with wheeled vehicles. Many of the States, as well as the Canadas, were represented.

The number of neat cattle exhibited was 237. Among these figured the Short-horns of Messrs. Sherwood, Allen, Wadsworth, and others. The show of Devons of Messrs. Garbutt, Beck and Allen, attracted much attention. The number of native cattle on exhibition showed that like the native inhabitants, their number was fast diminishing. A native cow was shown by Mr. Mason, of Onondaga county, whose excellency was established by the assurance of her owner, that sixty-seven pounds of butter had been made from her milk in a month. The number of horses entered was 140, sheep 110. The quantity of domestic articles, agricultural implements, &c., was larger than had been congregated before, and the show of fruit was worthy of the American orchard, the valley of the Genesee and its surroundings. The annual address was given by Dr. Beekman, of Columbia county, in the presence of an audience estimated to number 20,000.

The receipts of the fair at Rochester were \$2479.80. Receipts of the society for the year were \$4236.57; balance on hand from previous year, \$1843.92. Total in hands of treasurer, \$6080.49. There was a balance at the end of the year in favor of the society, of funds invested, \$3090.

At the winter meeting at the old State House, in Albany, 1844, eighty-nine gentlemen enrolled themselves as members, paying the sum of one dollar each. At this meeting Dr. John P. Beekman, of Columbia, was elected President, and Hon. Benjamin P. Johnson, of Oneida, Corresponding

Secretary. It was resolved to hold the next fair at Poughkeepsie, on the 18th and 19th days of September.

The following premiums were offered for essays to be furnished in season for next volume of transactions:

For the best series of essays on the importance of scientific knowledge in prosecuting the ordinary pursuits of agriculture	\$100
For the best essay on rotation of crops	20
do do farm management	20
do do subsoil plowing	20
do do culture and manufacture of silk	20
do do cultivation of the apple	20

The premiums on essays and agricultural implements were open for the people of the United States.

By an act of the Legislature of 1843, the Society had now the occupancy of the easterly hall of the first story of the old State House. Here officers and members of county societies, agriculturists and the friends of agriculture, not only residents of the State of New York but other states who might visit Albany, were invited to call and spend a social hour.

The Society now having not only a name but a place of deposit, invited correspondence and exchange of publications with similar societies in other states and nations, and communications from practical farmers and horticulturists and friends of science everywhere, on the varied subjects relative to the advancement of the art of improving the soil. Here and at this time was commenced the agricultural museum which is now the pleasant place of resort of thousands in each year, not only to cultivators of the soil but of every profession; not only residents of the State, but pilgrims from other states and nations whose sojournings here will give them opportunity to tarry an hour in this repository of the triumphs of rural arts.

The Transactions of the Society had now reached their third volume, and we find the quantity of matter they contain increasing with the prosperity of the Society and the yearnings of the farmer's mind for knowledge. The premiums offered for essays call forth talent, while scientific men give valuable articles from their pens to arouse the reading mind and call it into new fields of investigation. The third volume contains a rich article on the Geological Survey of the State of New York and its influence on the productive pursuits of community, with many illustrations by Prof. James Hall, also a treatise on insects injurious to field crops, fruit orchards, vegetable gardens and domestic animals, with illustrations by Willis Gaylord.

The fair at Poughkeepsie, in 1844, appears to have been an improvement on the former exhibitions. The grounds were selected for the fair with much good taste as regarded scenery and convenience, and comprised about ten acres. The buildings were fitted up with much care and skill and in a manner highly appropriate to the occasion, at an expense of about \$1,800, which was defrayed by the citizens of Poughkeepsie and vicinity. The display of animals was reported to be fine and varied; the show of agricultural implements was so great as to call out thirty-six premiums. The receipts of the fair were \$3,723.80. The amount paid in premiums was \$1,600.50, whether this includes cost of Transactions and diplomas awarded is not told.

The annual meeting of the Society was held in the Agricultural Rooms

in Albany, January 15, 1845, and called out an unusually large audience from different and remote parts of the State. At this meeting and exhibition an additional list of premiums was awarded on crops, the growth of the previous year, but not sufficiently advanced for decision at the fair in September. At this meeting Hon. Benjamin P. Johnson of Oneida County was chosen President, and Daniel Lee of Erie, Corresponding Secretary. It was recommended by the meeting that the next annual fair be held at Utica. It is remarked in the report of the Executive Committee for 1845, "that the influence of the Society is constantly extending and that new and valued friends are every year added to its members." If we may judge of the Society by its friends, we must conclude that this assertion is no result of egotism in its officers but a specification of facts that admit of no denial.

The arrangements of the fair ground were conducted in a style that gave the whole the appearance of fairy land. The number of persons in attendance on the first day of the fair was estimated by those who had an opportunity of judging very correctly, at 40,000, and included visitors from more than half the states of the Union. The receipts of the fair were \$4,450.18 being an advance of \$700 over any previous exhibition.

The number of animals on exhibition was 680, of which 276 were horned cattle; representing Short-horns, Herefords, Devons, Ayrshires and natives. There were 114 horses, 257 sheep, and 34 swine.

The other articles on exhibition were numerous. The Society awarded premiums on several essays on subjects of agricultural knowledge. The Secretary of the Society visited several counties in the State during the year, for the purpose of meeting the farmers and addressing them on the subjects of their calling. These meetings are said to have been productive of much good in arousing them.

1846. At the winter meeting of the Society, J. M. Sherwood, of Auburn, was chosen President, and Joel B. Nott, of Albany, Corresponding Secretary, and it was recommended that the next fair be held at Auburn, at which place it was satisfactorily and successfully held on the 16th, 17th and 18th days of September following. The receipts were \$4,530.17.

1847. The annual meeting was held at Albany, and George Vail, Esq., of Troy, was elected President, and Joel B. Nott, Corresponding Secretary. At a meeting of the Executive Committee, after the close of the annual meeting, January 21st, Mr. Tucker, editor of the Cultivator, resigned the office of Recording Secretary which he had held to the satisfaction of the Society since its reorganization, with the exception of one year, and the Hon. B. P. Johnson was, on motion of J. S. Wadsworth, appointed to fill the vacancy.

The volume of Transactions for 1846, introduces Dr. Asa Fitch, who has for some years been identified as entomologist of the Society, to its readers, through a valuable article on the Hessian fly.

It is shown by the same volume, that agricultural societies have been established and are in active operation in forty-seven counties of the State, while town societies and farmers' clubs are being successfully introduced in several sections of the State; many of these societies and minor associ-

ations no doubt owe their existence and prosperity to the energy and success of the parent society.

It is very properly remarked of the Society in 1847, that its influence at home and abroad is constantly increasing; in addition to the correspondence between the Secretary and many associations in different States in the Union, one had this year been opened with the Royal Agricultural Society of England, the Highland Agricultural Society of Scotland, and the Royal Improvement Society of Ireland, three of the oldest societies of Great Britain, and had secured an interchange of transactions between the two first of them. It had also made arrangements with A. Vattermare, of Paris, for exchanges with France. Donations of 100 volumes had been made during the year, also many valuable specimens had been added to the museum. The Society had caused an agricultural survey of Washington county to be made under the direction of Dr. Asa Fitch, of that county. The premium list of the Society was liberally increased.

The annual fair was held at Saratoga on the 14th, 15th and 16th days of September, calling together large assemblages on each day, and presenting an exhibition highly attractive. An unusual number of delegates from societies having similar objects in view from different States, were in attendance. Receipts, \$4,137.22.

1848. At the annual meeting in January, 1848, gentlemen from different parts of the State, and delegates from twenty county societies, were in attendance. A committee on fruits reported varieties for cultivation; only two grapes, the Isabella and Catawba. Lewis F. Allen was elected President, B. P. Johnson, of Albany, Recording Secretary, and Ebenezer Emmons, of Albany, Corresponding Secretary. Resolutions were adopted for the establishing of an agricultural school.

The annual fair was held at Buffalo on the 5th, 6th and 7th days of September. To give interest to the occasion, and more particularly to extend the cultivation of valuable fruits, the Executive Committee had issued a circular for a fruit growers convention to be held at the time and place of the fair. In response to this call, some of the most distinguished fruit growers of the country were in attendance, collected from the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, Ohio, Michigan, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and the two Canadas. The collection of fruit brought in from this wide extent of territory is reported to have been very varied and very fine. Interesting discussions on fruit growing were held during the meeting, and an association formed to be denominated the North American Pomological Convention. It was voted by the Convention, previous to adjournment, to meet again in 1849, at the place where the State fair should be held, the meeting to open the day after the close of the fair.

The number of articles on exhibition at the fair in Buffalo, exclusive of those in the fruit department, was 5,599.

There were more than 1,400 animals on exhibition, while the farm implements numbered over 1,000. The receipts of the exhibition were \$6,417.80, amount paid out in premiums \$4,278.42.

The winter meeting in January, 1849, brought together a large audience and a rich array of articles for exhibition and premiums.

The show of fruit for the season was especially fine. The officers of the year were chosen: John A. King, of Queens county, President, and B. P. Johnson, of Albany, Corresponding Secretary. It was resolved to hold the next fair at Syracuse, the citizens offering \$3,500 towards defraying the expenses. The fair of this year was pronounced as in many respects superior to any that had preceded; receipts, \$8,287.55. As a distinguishing feature in the progress of the years, the library was enriched by a large number of volumes, and many rare and very curious articles were deposited in the museum; a course of agricultural lectures was given before the Society by Prof. Johnston, of Edinburgh. The number of essays on subjects of an agricultural nature which were presented for premiums was unusually large. A premium of one hundred dollars was awarded to Prof. Norton, of Yale College, for an essay on the elements of scientific agriculture, which essay was published in the Transactions of that year. By a vote of the Society, 1,000 extra copies were printed at the expense thereof, to be distributed as premiums. The Society appointed Mr. J. H. Salisbury, M. D., their chemist, and a laboratory was assigned in the building containing their rooms.

1850. At the annual meeting in February, 1850, E. P. Prentice, of Albany, was elected President, and B. P. Johnson, Corresponding Secretary. The fair was held on the pleasant grounds midway between Albany and Troy. The amount received at this fair was \$10,855.61. There was paid in premiums \$5,220.36. Among the valuable papers contained in the Transactions for this year, we find an agricultural survey of Seneca county, by John Delafield, and a report of the trial of plows held that year, one of the most valuable trials ever held in this country. A monthly publication styled the Journal of the Society, through which the Executive Committee from time to time made known their doings, was established this year.

1851. At the winter meeting of 1851, John Delafield, of Seneca, was chosen President, and B. P. Johnson re-elected Corresponding Secretary. The number of persons who had become life members of the Society by the payment of \$50 or over, was twenty-six. At this meeting the sum for life membership was reduced from the payment of \$50 to that of \$10.

The accommodations for the Agricultural Museum having become too limited for the arrangement of articles already deposited there, it was resolved that the Society petition the Legislature for an extension of rooms for the use of the Society.

The fair was held at Rochester, on the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th days of September. The number of visitors on the ground during the fair was supposed to be nearly 100,000. The receipts of the fair were \$12,396.25. The number of cattle, horses, sheep, swine and poultry entered was 2,014; entries of grain and other farm products, agricultural implements and machinery, 283; then 358 entries of domestic manufactures, flowers and fruits, and of articles not enumerated above, 400. The Transactions this year contain a survey of Madison county, by Gurdon Evans. They are also enriched with the report on the Great Exhibition in London, in 1852, by the Secretary, Mr. Johnson, and many other valuable papers.

Ten years of patient toiling and waiting, and it holds its fair at Roch-

ester. But four days instead of two are now required for a thorough carrying out of its objects. This year, at the eleventh exhibition of the Society, the receipts at the fair alone reached the sum of \$12,396.25, while the income of the year stood \$14,575.78; the cash balance in favor of the Society at the close of the year was \$4,543.57. The number of life members of the Society at this time was forty-two.

1852. The annual meeting of the Society, at their rooms, in Albany, was one of unusual interest. By the treasurer's report it appears the amount paid in premiums was \$5,155.73. The affairs of the Society were in a most prosperous condition. Henry Wager, of Oneida, was chosen President, and Mr. Johnson, of Albany, re-elected Corresponding Secretary, and the annual fair was directed to be held at Utica, in September. After the election of officers there was a presentation of the medals of the Society to its members who received awards at the great exhibition in London, by Mr. Delafield, and the occasion was one of much interest. The number of articles on exhibition at this meeting, though it was held in mid-winter, was very large, especially of fruits. The subject of an agricultural college was brought up and faithfully discussed. At a subsequent meeting of the Executive Committee, it was voted to appropriate \$173, to purchase of Townsend Glover a collection of models of fruits, with a valuable collection of insects prepared in the same way as the fruits. The specimens so secured have now an appropriate place in the Society's museum. A trial of agricultural implements was held under the auspices of the Society, at Geneva, in July of this year, and open for competition throughout the Union. The number of competitors was large and the show of machinery very fine.

The Annual Fair was held at Utica, September 7 to 10th. The attendance was large, showing that there was no diminution of interest from former years; and the show itself was of great excellence. The annual address was delivered by Hon. Horatio Seymour, of Utica. Gov. Hunt also delivered an appropriate address. Among articles of interest on exhibition were a variety of grains from England, Scotland and Russia, which were presented by the Secretary, who represented our State and Society in the London exhibition of 1851, from gentlemen in London, and Baron de Nottbeck, the Imperial commissioner from Russia, at the London exhibition in 1851. The receipts of this fair were \$8,336.16. Among the valuable reports this year were the trial of implements at Geneva; Prof. John P. Norton's lecture on Science and Agriculture, and Mr. W. C. Watson's survey of Essex county.

1853. The annual meeting for 1853 was a very interesting one, held on the 9th February. Lewis G. Morris, of Westchester, was elected President, and Mr. Johnson, Secretary. The annual fair was directed to be held at Saratoga Springs, in September.

The fair of 1853 was held at Saratoga Springs, September 20, 21, 22, 23. Although the unpleasant state of the weather deterred many from attending on this anniversary, the exhibition and the spirit manifested showed conclusively that the people were not losing a jot of their interest in the objects of the Society—receipts \$6,411.39. Among the valuable papers of the Transactions of that year, is a supplement of the report on

the survey of Essex county, by W. C. Watson, and a paper on apple tree pests, by Dr. Asa Fitch.

1854. The annual meeting of the Society commenced February 8, 1854, the President of the Society, Hon. L. G. Morris, in the chair.

The following resolution was passed, soon after the opening of the meeting, to wit:

Resolved, That the Legislature be requested to take such measures, at its present session, as will insure at an early day the alteration of the old State Hall, so as to furnish suitable rooms for the accommodation of the New York State Agricultural Society.

At this meeting William Kelly, of Dutchess, was elected President, and B. P. Johnson Corresponding Secretary. Fair to be held at New York, in October.

The annual fair was held at Hamilton Square, in the city of New York, early in October, and the farmers and artisans of the State, by their contributions to its interest, enabled it to sustain the reputation of similar fairs in previous years—receipts \$9,538.70.

Among the cheering events of the year, the Legislature considered the application of the Society, in relation to the old State Hall, and made a grant of \$25,000 to furnish more commodious accommodations for the museum and library of the Society, and for rooms for meeting, lectures and laboratory for its use, and contracts were made to carry out the objects of the Legislature.

The Legislature also made an appropriation of \$1,000 for an examination of insects, especially those injurious to vegetation, and authorized the appointment by the Executive Committee of the Society, of a person to carry out the plan, and Dr. Asa Fitch, of Salem, Washington county, was appointed entomologist of the Society, and a position assigned him in the Society's rooms. The first report of Dr. Fitch, on insects, under his appointment, may be found in Transactions of 1854, and is a paper that clearly shows the value of his appointment to all engaged in the culture of the earth.

1855. At the annual meeting of the society in February 1855, Hon. Samuel Cheever, of Saratoga county, was elected President, and Mr. Johnson, Secretary. The subject of locating the State Fair permanently at some central point was discussed at length, and the question was decided by a vote of sixty-three in favor of permanent location, and one hundred and seven against it.

The fair of the society was held at Elmira, and it was the first held in the southern tier of counties, and continued from the first to the fifth day of October, and was fully attended. Receipts \$11,527.25.

It has been stated that the Legislature of 1854, passed an act to raise and repair the old State Hall, and appropriated 25,000 dollars for that purpose, and the contracts were made and the work commenced under the direction of the Commissioners of the Land Office, but it was found that the old building would not answer, and the Legislature appropriated an additional sum of 15,000 dollars, authorizing the Commissioners of the Land Office to erect an entire new building.

The Commissioners proceeded to the erection of the new building—Hon.

E. W. Leavenworth, Secretary of State, *James M. Cook*, Comptroller, and *John T. Clark*, State Engineer, were appointed to superintend the erection—and a building was erected and arranged under the direction of the society, with accommodations such as were desired. The contractors were *John Bridgford*, *John N. Parker* and *Joseph Davis*—and *Wm. S. Woollett*, Architect. The building was commenced in April, and completed in November following—within the appropriations of the Legislature. The work was done in a manner most creditable to the architect and contractors. This building for the use of the State Agricultural Society, and the collection of Natural History, is every way worthy of the State, and an ornament to the city.

1856. The annual meeting of the society was held February 18th, and *Theodore S. Faxon*, of Utica, was elected President, and *Mr. Johnson*, Secretary—and the fair was located at Watertown.

The fair of 1856, was held at Watertown, in Jefferson county; *Theodore S. Faxon*, of Utica, was presiding officer for the year, under whose administration the interests of the society were increased in a pleasant and agreeable proportion. Receipts \$8,536.00.

1857. The annual meeting of the society was held at Albany, February 11th, and *Hon. Alonzo S. Upham*, of Genesee, was elected President, and *Mr. Johnson*, Secretary. The fair was located at Buffalo.

The fair at Buffalo, held in October, was one of the most successful held by the society; many distinguished men were present to witness the splendid exhibition of the farmers of New York. The President of the United States, *Mr. Fillmore*, and His Excellency *John A. King*, Governor of the State, *Hon. Mr. Alexander*, President Provincial Agricultural Association of West Canada, and several other distinguished gentlemen from Canada, were present. Receipts of the fair \$15,585.34.

The address was delivered by the *Hon. Edward Everett*, of Massachusetts; and never did that distinguished orator deliver a more effective address than upon that occasion. The Transactions of this year contain many very valuable papers.

At this annual meeting the new *State Hall* was formally dedicated to the cause and service of the farmers of New York, through the State Agricultural Society, their generous and able friend and co-operator.

At the dedication, prayer was offered by the *Rev. Dr. Rogers*, of Albany; a statement of the society's operations was made by *Col. B. P. Johnson*, Secretary, and appropriate addresses by *Hon. Samuel Cheever*, ex-President, *Hon. T. C. Peters*, *Hon. William Kelly*; His Excellency *John A. King*, *T. S. Faxon*, *Esq.*, *W. H. Bogart*, *Esq.*, and *Hon. Harvey Baldwin*.

A collation suited to the occasion closed the exercises of the dedication.

As this article may fall under the eye of some who have never visited this grand repository of Nature and Art, we here subjoin a description of the rooms condensed from an article that appeared in the *New York Tribune* of May 19, 1860.

The basement of the building has a room for the taxidermist, and the remainder is occupied for various purposes; on the ground floor rooms for the secretary, library and society's meetings, and the museum, which is

sixty-seven feet long and thirty-seven wide, containing two galleries supported by high iron columns, the whole being lighted by large windows in the sides and two large sky-lights in the roof, thus giving the full benefit of ample light at all times.

On the lower floor are arranged cases around the walls appropriated to miscellaneous articles, such as costumes and fabrics of other nations, antiquities, relics found in this country, curiosities, old spinning-wheels, looms, farming tools, minerals, and other things of interest, while within the area formed by these cases are agricultural implements of various models, which have been from time to time presented to the Society.

On the second floor the cases are filled first with specimens of grain, commencing with those of our own country; here are scores of varieties of Indian corn, wheat, rye, oats, and other cereals, and also of garden vegetables. England, Hungary, Bavaria, Austria, France, Africa, and other portions of the globe are represented in this department. On the third floor, the cases along one entire side are appropriated to the results of the entomological survey by Doctor Fitch, and exhibit a vast number of insects in every state from the egg to the moth.

Among the curiosities of the place are a collection of agricultural and horticultural tools from India, showing how rapidly nations will advance in the arts under the influence of cool indifference.

It is a very pleasant reflection, that as large as this collection now is, extensive additions are being made to it each year, not only from the State and our own country, but travellers abroad are now so mindful of its utility and importance, that they make it a part of their mission abroad to collect something to add to the value of this museum at home.

The library of the Society now contains about 7000 volumes, among which are many of foreign origin, obtained through the system of exchanges with other nations, so happily arranged and carried out by Colonel Johnson, Corresponding Secretary.

These rooms, as they well may be, are now not only a resort for denizens of the city to while away a leisure hour in surveying the treasures they contain, but the traveler, as he passes by and through Albany, puts down "a visit to the Agricultural and Geological Rooms" as one of the indispensables of his jaunt. They have become the resort of thousands each year, not only of the State of New York, but of all States and of all countries whose citizens visit our shores. Not only the farmer calls to make inquiries in this repository of the treasures of his calling, and the mechanic to witness the progress of art, but here, too, is the storehouse where the student of every profession may gather wisdom and treasure up instruction.

1858. The annual meeting of the society was held at Albany, February 10th—Hon. William T. McCoun, of Queens, was elected President, and Mr. Johnson, Secretary. The fair was located at Syracuse.

The annual fair was entirely successful, and the exhibition showed a creditable advance in every department. Receipts at the fair \$10,970.28.

The Transactions of this year contain many interesting and valuable articles. Among others, prize essay on the Fishes of New York, by R. L. Pell; Fences and Fence Tools, by S. Edwards Todd, and Dr. Fitch's Fifth Report on Insects.

1859. The annual meeting was held at Albany, February 8th—Hon. A. B. Conger elected President, and Mr. Johnson, Secretary. Albany was selected as the place for holding the next fair, in October. The exhibition this year was of unusual excellence, and the attendance very large. The receipts were the largest ever received, amounting to \$18,819.33, and the income of the year \$24,410.26. The premiums paid \$6,115, or three times the amount of its income in the fall of 1841. The names of nearly 400 persons from all parts of the State, and from other States, are registered as life members—among whom are many distinguished in other professions.

The Transactions of this year contain many interesting articles. The Survey of the County of Onondaga, by the Hon. George Geddes, is one of very great value, and shows the importance of these surveys. The Agriculture of Great Britain, by the treasurer of the society, Luther H. Tucker, is an instructive and interesting article. Mr. Willard gives a very interesting account of cheese dairying in Herkimer county.

1860. The annual meeting of the Society was held February 8th, and Hon. Benjamin N. Huntington, of Oneida, was elected President, and Mr. Johnson, Secretary. The Annual Fair was located at Elmira, to be held in October.

The weather at the time of the Fair was unpropitious, but notwithstanding the attendance was most gratifying, and the exhibition creditable to the State. The Chief Magistrate of the State, the Lieutenant Governor, and several other distinguished gentlemen from New York, and from other States and Canada, were in attendance.

In the Transactions for this year many very valuable reports will be found. Dr. Fitch's sixth report on insects, giving the history of the wheat midge, is one of great practical value. The receipts at the Fair were \$9,345.95.

1861. The annual meeting was held February 13th. Hon. George Geddes, of Onondaga, was elected President, and Mr. Johnson, Secretary, and the Fair located at Watertown.

The Fair was held September 17th to 20th. Never in the history of the Society had its Annual Fair been held under so many discouragements. The country in the midst of a contest for the existence of the government itself, and the minds of the people caused by every force of circumstances to turn aside from the pursuits of peace. But notwithstanding all these discouragements, the President of the Society and its Executive Board, devoted themselves unweariedly to their work, and the farmers and mechanics nobly responded, and the Fair was entirely successful. The receipts were \$8,018.40.

The Transactions present many very valuable articles. Dr. Fitch's 7th report on various insects, the Hessian fly, among others, was a very valuable one, and a very able article on dairy farming by X. A. Willard. The address of President Geddes was one of great practical interest, and has been, we are told, widely circulated. A most valuable article on fine wool sheep husbandry, by Henry S. Randall, LL. D., is given in this volume.

1862. The annual meeting was held on the 12th of February. Hon. Ezra Cornell, of Ithaca, was elected President, and Mr. Johnson, Secretary. The Fair was located at Rochester. The Transactions this year contain many

valuable and interesting articles, among others the survey of the celebrated dairy county, Orange, will be found of very great interest. Its early history is given, showing the severe trials of its early settlers, many of whose descendants still occupy the farms which their ancestors defended in the hostile strife waged by the English and their Indian associates.

A very interesting article on the associated dairies and cheese manufactories of New York, by X. A. Willard of Little Falls, is also given.

The President, Mr. Cornell, and Mr. Johnson, the Secretary, attended the great exhibition of works of industry and art in London, this year. The report of Mr. Johnson will be found full of interest to American readers, showing in the midst of the mighty conflict at home, the inventors of our country receiving a larger proportion of prizes than any other country, in one of the most extensive exhibitions ever held.

Dr. Fitch's 8th report on insects, is given in this volume.

The Executive Committee early in the season debated the question whether in the existing state of affairs in our country, it was desirable to hold the usual annual exhibition. The Committee decided to hold the exhibition, believing that the farmers and mechanics of the State would sustain the Society, and the result of the exhibition showed that this was the only decision that would have met the wishes of the people. The Monroe County Agricultural Society, and the citizens of Rochester, with a liberality above all praise, prepared for the exhibition, and the farmers of Western New York by thousands, appeared with their contributions to sustain the exhibition.

The receipts of the Fair amounted to \$11,559.45.

In closing up my labors, I am aware that I have not done all that the work demanded. I have, however, brought together the history and proceedings of the Agricultural associations of New York, which I doubt not will be interesting to the farmers of the State.

I am indebted to the Secretary of the Society for reference to the early labors of the distinguished men of the State for the advancement of agriculture and manufactures, and have brought forward the operations of the early friends to the time (1841,) when a new and vigorous effort was made, which has been followed up so successfully as to place the New York State Agricultural Society among the most useful associations in this country. Should my labors in the brief history of your efforts be the means of extending the usefulness of your Society, I shall be greatly gratified.

At the reorganization of this Society, there were but few county organizations to promote agriculture. Now there is a flourishing society in nearly every county, while in some counties two are sustained, and town associations and farmers' clubs are very common, and found to be productive of noble results. How far the State Society has been instrumental in establishing and encouraging these minor associations, we cannot venture a conjecture, but by holding its fairs in autumn in different parts of the State in different years, and by its attractive winter meetings and exhibitions at the capitol of the State, where legislation naturally convenes representatives from every neighborhood, an influence must be extended over the State, which cannot be over estimated. The reports of these county and town societies, as published in the Transactions, tell in language plain and

unmistakable, that the farmers of the State are awake to the honor and interest of their calling.

The Transactions of the Society, published yearly, and liberally distributed among the people, either as premiums or in other ways, accomplish much through their addresses, their able essays, with which nearly every volume is liberally provided; their lectures, statistics and reports, must be doing a matchless work in aiding the Society in carrying out its grand programme of improving the mind and the soil, of introducing better cultivation, new and valuable crops, better herds and flocks, better buildings, and roads, and schools; in short, better everything. Their influence is by no means restricted to the State. The people of each State seek for these transactions with eagerness. Their influence is world-wide. They are sought for, and read and admired by the people of all lands.

Blest as the State of New York is in extent of territory, its climate softened in the interior by its many lakes, its variety of soil adapted to all purposes of cultivation that a temperate and cooler cultivation may require; her sons stimulated by every inducement that the natural fertility of her soil and improved management can give, what is not to be expected of the greatness and the glory of her future agriculture? Will she not one day sit as a queen among the sister States, and say to them, come, see how fertility smiles all over our domain, under our thorough course of cultivation, it fills our valleys with the finest wheat and the golden corn; it has clothed our hills and our mountain sides with the richest herbage; our herds and flocks feed in choicest pasture, filled to abundance; the choicest, richest fruits drop in all our paths. And then shall a generation fill the earth who will venerate the name and admire the labors of Livingston and his worthy co-workers in the last century, and of Buel, Van Rensselaer, Delafield, Beekman, and a great host of others now living, who in dark and discouraging hours have toiled, patiently and hopefully toiled on, to bring this Society through the feebleness of its infancy, the inexperience of its growth to the strength of its manhood, and who may now safely rejoice in the rich promise it gives for its mature years.

WM. BACON.

RECEIPTS OF STATE FAIRS FROM 1841 TO 1863.

PLACES.	-Year.	Time of holding fairs.	Fair receipts.	Other receipts.	Presidents.	Secretaries.
Syracuse.....	1841	September 29, 30	\$349 00	\$1,707 87	Joel B. Nott	H. S. Randall.
Albany.....	1842	do 27, 28, 29.....	876 70	1,473 22	James S. Wadsworth*.....	Luther Tucker.
Rochester.....	1843	do 19, 20, 21.....	2,479 88	1,756 79	do	do
Poughkeepsie.....	1844	do 17, 18, 19.....	3,723 80	1,142 00	Jno. P. Beekman*.....	H. O'Reilly.
Utica.....	1845	do 16, 17, 18.....	4,450 18	940 00	B. P. Johnson.....	Luther Tucker.
Auburn.....	1846	do 15, 16, 17.....	4,530 17	1,105 00	Jno. M. Sherwood.....	Joel B. Nott.
Saratoga.....	1847	do 14, 15, 16.....	4,187 22	1,735 97	George Vail.....	B. P. Johnson.
Buffalo.....	1848	do 5, 6, 7.....	6,417 80	1,917 25	Lewis F. Allen.....	do
Syracuse.....	1849	do 11, 12, 13.....	8,287 55	1,793 28	John A. King.....	do
Albany.....	1850	do 3, 4, 5, 6.....	10,855 61	1,590 00	Ezra P. Prentice.....	do
Rochester.....	1851	do 16, 17, 18, 19.....	12,396 25	2,179 53	John Delafield*.....	do
Utica.....	1852	do 7, 8, 9, 10.....	8,336 16	1,147 06	Henry Wager *.....	do
Saratoga.....	1853	do 20, 21, 22, 23.....	6,411 39	1,190 38	Lewis G. Morris.....	do
New York.....	1854	October 3, 4, 5, 6.....	9,538 70	204 75	William Kelly.....	do
Elmira.....	1855	do 2, 3, 4, 5.....	11,527 25	Samuel Cheever.....	do
Watertown.....	1856	September 30—October 1, 2, 3.....	8,536 00	1,300 00	Theodore S. Faxton.....	do
Buffalo.....	1857	October 6, 7, 8, 9.....	15,585 34	2,500 00	Alonzo S. Upham.....	do
Syracuse.....	1858	do 5, 6, 7, 8.....	10,970 28	3,290 73	William T. McCoun.....	do
Albany.....	1859	do 4, 5, 6, 7.....	18,819 33	2,940 00	A. B. Conger.....	do
Elmira.....	1860	do 2, 3, 4, 5.....	9,345 95	3,031 80	B. N. Huntington.....	do
Watertown.....	1861	September 17, 18, 19, 20.....	8,018 40	2,511 12	George Geddes.....	do
Rochester.....	1862	do 30—October 1, 2, 3.....	11,559 45	2,008 69	Ezra Cornell.....	do
Utica.....	1863	do 15, 16, 17, 18.....	11,619 78	2,161 67	Edward G. Faile*.....	do
			\$188,822 19	\$39,637 11		
				188,822 19		
Total.....				\$228,459 30		

* Deceased.